REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are pending. Claims 1-3, 6-9, and 11-19 stand rejected. Claims 4, 5, and 10 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Claims 1, 7, and 12 are amended herein. Claims 4 and 10 are canceled. New claims 20-23 are added.

The drawings were objected to as not including reference numerals mentioned in the description, and were also objected to as including reference numerals not mentioned in the description. Applicants have amended the description to correctly recite reference numerals and also to recite all reference numerals that are included in the drawings. No drawing changes are necessary.

Claims 1-3, 6-9, 11, and 18-19 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent 5,682,386 (Arimilli et al.) in view of U.S. Patent 6,269,095 (Neubauer et al.).

Claims 1 and 7 recite one or more bypassing elements positioned between the plurality of telephonic devices and the statistical multiplexor and operative to connect the plurality of telephonic devices either to the at least one call processing element or to the communications network. Advantageously, the bypass elements can be implemented to eliminate the prior drawback of a multiplexor system operating from a household electrical supply and therefore becoming totally inoperative in the event of a power outage or other failure of the wall unit (see page 8, lines 19-23 of the application). Neither Arimilli nor Neubauer disclose or suggest bypass devices.

The Office Action includes claim 18 along with the rejection of claims 1 and 7. However, claim 18 discloses a method of operating a gateway server, with the gateway server completing a communication for a residence-sited wall unit and operating in conjunction with the wall unit to multiplex data over a single telephone line. The gateway server receives a voice call setup request from a remote wall unit, initiates a telephone call setup, connects a call, converts a VOIP encoded signal to a voice signal, and converts a voice signal to a VOIP encoded signal. Neither Arimilli nor Neubauer disclose PSTN gateway servers that work in conjunction with wall units to multiplex and communicate

telephone, fax, and data communications.

In contrast to claim 18, Neubauer discloses a simple gateway that merely converts data in order to interface between a PSTN and the Internet. Neubauer does not receive both voice and data calls over a single line, does not route calls from a wall unit, and does not route calls to either the Internet or the PSTN. All communications in Neubauer are protocol converted and are passed through the gateway.

In contrast to claim 18, the multiplexor device in Arimilli is a specialized modem, and cannot communicate with any other device in the PSTN or with the Internet. Instead, the multiplexor device of Arimilli (site A) only communicates with another such device, *i.e.*, with site B (see FIGS. 4A and 4B; col. 4, lines 35-39 and lines 59-62; and col. 6, lines 5-9). Arimilli therefore requires two or more specialized modems in order for communication to be established.

Independent claims 1, 7, and 18 therefore include features that are neither taught nor suggested by Arimilli and Neubauer. Claims 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, and 19 are allowable for the same reasons as claims 1, 7, and 18.

Claims 12-17 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as obvious over Arimilli and Neubauer in view of U.S. Patent 5,506,844 (Rao).

Claim 12 requires one or more bypassing elements positioned between the plurality of telephonic devices and the statistical multiplexor and operative to connect the plurality of telephonic devices either to the at least one call processing element or to the communications network. In addition, claim 12 requires a control coupled to at least one call processor. Neither Arimilli, Neubauer, or Rao disclose or suggest bypass devices. In addition, Rao does not disclose a system controller, as in the present invention. Rao discloses a video compressor/multiplexor that includes a system controller. However, the system controller in Rao merely controls the transmission rate of compressed video data fed out of the multiplexor and onto a communication channel (see col. 1, lines 8-14; col. 2, lines 27-34; and col. 6, lines 14-26). Rao does not teach a call processor or controlling a call processor. Furthermore, Rao does not teach a control that exchanges signaling information with a gateway switch.

Independent claim 12 therefore includes features that are neither taught nor suggested by Arimilli, Neubauer, and Rao. Claims 13-17 are allowable for the same reasons as claim 12.

Applicant submits that the new claims 20-23 are also patentable in view of Arimilli, Neubauer, and Rao, for the same reasons as independent claims 1, 7, 12, and 18.

Applicant further submits that there are numerous additional reasons in support of patentability, but that such reasons are moot in light of the above remarks and are omitted in the interests of brevity. Applicant respectfully requests allowance of claims 1-23.

Please feel free to call me to discuss rejection or allowance of claims 1-23.

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Enclosures

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